



IV. Implementation Activities

A. Columbia City Community Focus

AI – Capital Infrastructure

Note: Refer to Figure 20, page 26, for a map of the recommended improvements.

- AI-a Develop the 37th Avenue S. tunnel light rail transit (LRT) route with an underground transit station at 37th Avenue S. and S. Edmunds Street to provide a centralized transit station and build upon Columbia City's opportunity to become South Seattle's premier community-based center for cultural and commercial activity.** If a Martin Luther King Jr. Way route is chosen, provide substantially more public and private investment in the Columbia City Core
- AI-b Provide street, sidewalk, street tree and alley improvements in existing single family neighborhoods.** A capital improvement plan for the existing single family neighborhood should be developed in conjunction with home ownership zone strategies for new housing and preservation of existing housing. Many streets within the low and moderate income single family areas of Columbia City are in poor repair. Sidewalks, curbs and gutters do not exist or are deteriorated. Alleys are not paved or are in poor repair. Neighborhood residents do not have the resources to make improvements through local improvement districts. City investment in infrastructure

would contribute to the appearance, longevity and stability of the area and could help attract new **infill** development.

- AI-c Enhance Rainier Playfield.** Develop unique park entryway features at both Rainier Avenue S. entrances, particularly at Rainier and Alaska Street to improve the connection with Columbia City, Columbia Green, and the **Genesee** Business District. Enhance crosswalks at both intersections to improves safety and visibility. Develop landscaped stairclimbs at both Rainier entrances to enhance neighborhood access to the park. Develop a pathway around the interior of the park. Improve the pedestrian connection between the park and the community center.
- AI-d Enhance Columbia Park (a.k.a. Columbia Green).** Although one of the community's most valued assets, Columbia Park is underutilized and in need of improvements. Hire a landscape architect to work with the community and create an improvement plan for the park
- AI-e Improve the pedestrian connection between Rainier Vista and Columbia City.** Provide sidewalk, landscaping, street trees, lighting, and **signage** improvements to Alaska and **Edmunds** streets from Martin Luther King Jr. Way to Rainier Avenue.
- AI-f Provide streetscape improvements in the business district core.** Extend the signature streetscape pattern/elements of Columbia City's Historic District on Rainier Avenue S., northward from S. Edmunds Street to S. Alaska Street and on side streets just off of Rainier, as streetfront redevelopment occurs. This includes brick paving patterns, street lights, landscaping, and street furniture improvements.
- AI-g Reduce the total number of travel lanes on Rainier Avenue S. within Columbia City from four to two, plus a center turn lane.** Although this would serve as a traffic calming measure, it can improve efficiency by moving **left-**turning vehicles out of the through lanes. It may also provide additional space for bicycle lanes. The implementation is contingent upon further study that this measure will not substantially reduce Rainier Avenue's vehicle capacity and efficiency.
- AI-b Create angled parking on side streets within the business district core.** This will help to provide more parking for Columbia City businesses. **The** streets include



east of Rainier; S. Ferdinand, on the east side of Rainier; and on S. Hudson, one block west of Rainier. In conjunction with these improvements, enhance the existing angled parking area on S. Hudson, east of Rainier, by providing paving and striping improvements. Ensure, however, that all parking revisions do not conflict with other recommendations, including sidewalk, landscaping, and other streetscape improvements. A study on the project's feasibility is essential.

A2 – Regulatory Measures

Note: Refer to the activities under C2, Residential Neighborhoods and Housing for zone change recommendations. Refer to Figure 21, page 27, for a map of the recommended zoning changes.

A2-a Develop measures to inform prospective businesses owners within Columbia City of the Historic District designation. This is essential at the business license stage to inform businesses of the requirements for signage, exterior work, etc., within a historic district.

A3 – Programs

A3-a Develop a parking management plan for Columbia City. Seek formal approval for public use of the area's private parking lots. Manage employee parking in ways that reduces impacts on customer/visitor parking availability.

A4 – Special Opportunities

A4-a Redevelop the Columbia Plaza site. Originally the Tradewell Supermarket, this structure, built in 1957, ignores both the historic pattern of streetfront buildings on Rainier Avenue and Columbia Park in the rear, and detracts from the ambiance of neighborhood. Redeveloping this key site consistent with the neighborhood's traditional historic pattern not only would strengthen the appearance of Rainier Avenue S. and Columbia Green, but could provide a vibrant mix of uses including retail, housing, and offices. The site's redevelopment should also incorporate a permanent location for the Farmers Market (connected to Columbia Park).

A4-b Green Columbia Elementary School's (Orca)

Playground. The playground on the west side of the school currently looks like an abandoned parking lot with its of cracked asphalt and a chain link fence. Breaking up the starkness of the playground with "green" elements would contribute to improving the image of the neighborhood.

A4-c Find a permanent home for Columbia City's Farmers

Market. Incorporate provisions for a Farmers Market site in the redevelopment of the, Columbia Plaza site and Columbia Park improvements.

A4-d Participate in efforts to expand the Columbia City

Library. Work with the Seattle Library to develop an expansion plan for the Columbia City branch library. Special attention will be paid to the needs of school age children, residents of Rainier Vista, and the blind. Retain architectural integrity of historic structure with expansion.

A4-e Enhance and promote the Columbia City Cultural

Center. Provide improvements such as new **signage**. Integrate the events of the cultural center into the community.

A4-f Open an art gallery on Rainier Avenue in Columbia

City. This is a high priority of Southeast Seattle Arts Council (SESAC). Provide gallery space at the street level with artist live/work space above.

A4-g Redevelop the Furon site if existing activities cease.

Furon, an aerospace, medical, and computer components manufacturing industry, occupies the largest piece of property under single ownership along Rainier Avenue S., within the Columbia City area (*approximately 4.5 acres*). Although **Furon** has been a valuable source of employment in Columbia City since 1955, the site represents a valuable redevelopment opportunity should **Furon's** activities cease in the near future. If this occurs, combination of pedestrian oriented neighborhood services, retail, office, and residential uses would be appropriate at this location. Redevelopment here would be an opportunity to substantially improve the streetscape of Hudson and Dawson streets, and 37th Avenue, in addition to the Rainier Avenue streetfront.



B. Rainier Corridor

B1 – Capitol Infrastructure

Note: Refer to Figures 29 and 31, pages 33 and 35, for a maps of recommended improvements.

- B1-a Resurface Rainier Avenue S. with concrete to reduce the need for maintenance, increase the life expectancy of the street, and improve the pedestrian environment.** Heavy bus and truck volumes and poor road conditions, particularly in the Hillman City and Darigold areas, are increasing the need to substantially improve the surface of Rainier Avenue. Poor drainage contributes to a harsh pedestrian environment due to splashing water from passing cars onto sidewalks. Where possible, restore curbs to 6' height to enhance pedestrian safety and discourage cars from parking on the sidewalks.
- B1-b Develop gateway treatments incorporating public art at the major entries to Genesee and Hillman City.** For Hillman City, install gateway features near Lucile Street S. in the north and Juneau Street S. in the south. For Genesee, install a gateway feature at its southern end near Oregon Street S.
- B1-c Make traffic signals more pedestrian friendly.** The present traffic signal cycles on Rainier Avenue S. are so long that they cause pedestrians to be restless and cross the street illegally. Reducing the response time for pedestrian activated signals and including automatic WALK signals for each cycle will increase safety and promote pedestrian activity in Columbia City.
- B1-d Improve the visibility of crosswalks.** Improving pedestrian crossing designs, such as brick, textured concrete, or cobblestone crosswalks promotes pedestrian activity and improves safety. Add new crosswalks where appropriate.
- B1-e Develop signature streetscape treatments and pedestrian features for Genesee and Hillman City business district cores.** Include local artwork, kiosks, bus shelters, and signage that can help identify and distinguish the districts.
- B1-f In conjunction with the Rainier/Columbia City LRT alignment, develop a linear park with separated pathways along Rainier Avenue S. north of Alaska.** The park would lie within the strip of land between the LRT

line and Rainier Avenue. Also provide opportunities for redevelopment in key locations that compliment the park, pathways, and Genesee business district activities.

B1-g Designate Rainier Avenue S. a Key Pedestrian Street.

This can help set priorities for pedestrian-related improvements throughout the corridor.

B1-h Limit curb cuts along Rainier Avenue S., from S. Charlestown Street to S. Orcas Street to one per site.

Encourage adjacent sites to share driveways and possibly parking lots.

B1-i Reconfigure intersections with wider than normal approaches along Rainier Ave S. to shorten pedestrian walking distance. This includes intersections at obtuse angles and/or more than one cross-street that increase the amount of street that pedestrians must cross. (e.g., Lucile, Charlestown/Letitia).

B1-j Narrow the east (Genesee) approach at the intersection of Rainier Avenue S. and S. Genesee Street. This is a potentially hazardous intersections where cars turning to or from Genesee have the impression that they do not need to stop and pedestrians are unsure when to cross to/from the islands.-- Reduce the curb radius to a standard dimension, remove islands, maintain sufficient room for buses and trucks to turn.

B1-k Plant more street trees. Most of the Rainier Avenue S. corridor has a softening canopy of street trees. Continue this pattern by infilling street trees where absent.

B1-l Provide more pedestrian-oriented street lighting along the Rainier Corridor. Many areas along Rainier are dark and intimidating, and thus deter pedestrian activity. Specific sites include the core of Hillman City and sidewalks adjacent to Rainier Playfield and the Darigold facility.

B2 – Regulatory Measures

Note: Refer to the activities under C2, Residential Neighborhoods and Housing for zone change recommendations. Refer to Figures 28 and 30, pages 32 and 34, for a map of the recommended zoning changes.



B4 – Special Opportunities

- B4-a Develop/redevelop vacant and run down properties along the corridor.** Work with SEED or other community organizations, property owners, realtors, and developers to target properties within the Rainier corridor for acquisition, redevelopment or co-development.
- B4-b Support the Rainier Valley Square II development as a mixed-use (commercial and residential) project with a pedestrian focus along Rainier Avenue S.** *(See Activity C4-b for more details.)*
- B4-c Promote the development of artists lofts and galleries in Hillman City.**

C. Residential Neighborhoods and Housing

CI – Capitol Infrastructure

Note: Refer to Figures 20, 29, 31, and 50 on pages 26, 33, 35, and 53, respectively, for maps locating specific improvements in the Columbia City Core and along the Rainier Avenue and Martin Luther King Junior Way corridors.

- CI-a Provide street, sidewalk, street tree, and alley improvements in existing single family neighborhoods.** In addition to the Columbia City single family area (see *A1-c*), provide improvements on 37th Avenue S. between Genesee and Dakota streets and 30th Avenue S. between Alaska and Angeline streets.
- CI-b Identify options for City of Seattle utility incentives for new development.** Identify methods of City provision of offsite improvements and utilities normally required of housing developers such as sidewalks and street improvements. Developers of new market rate multifamily housing in the Rainier and Martin Luther King Jr. are virtual pioneers in this market.

C2 – Regulatory Measures

Note: Refer to Figure 39, page 41, for a map of all recommended zoning changes.

- C2-a Create a P-2 pedestrian overlay zone along Rainier Avenue in the Columbia City core (*this has been adopted*).** This will help strengthen and reinforce Columbia City as a pedestrian-oriented neighborhood center. The P-2 Overlay Zone will reduce parking requirements for businesses and limit uses to those that generally create pedestrian activity.
- C2-b Create a P-2 pedestrian overlay zone along Rainier Avenue in the Hillman City core (*this has been adopted*).** This aims to strengthen and reinforce Hillman City as a small, pedestrian-oriented neighborhood center. The P-2 Overlay Zone will reduce parking requirements for businesses and limit uses to those that generally create pedestrian activity.
- C2-c Amend all Commercial (C) zones in the planning area to allow single purpose residential development outright, except where a particular property is needed to support light rail stations.** This change would not prohibit any commercial use now possible, but would give a property owner more choices for development of a particular property and may encourage some residential development.
- C2-d Allow single purpose residential development outright on all proposed (NC/R) Neighborhood Commercial/Residential zones in the planning area.**
- C2-e Relax the storefront commercial requirements for mixed use structures in all NC/R zoned areas within the planning area.** Specifically, this means not requiring the 80% nonresidential facade coverage for mixed-use structures, while allowing for unlimited residential density in mixed-use structures (unlimited density is already provided for in single purpose residential uses in the NC/R zone).
- C2-f Change all NC zoned areas to NCR-2/40, with some exceptions noted below.** This change does not change the potential for a broad range of single purpose or mixed commercial uses. The effects are: (1) more choices for property owners, (2) increased potential for residential single purpose or mixed use buildings, (3) a mix of commercial uses more compatible with neighborhood pedestrian oriented business districts and residential areas, and (4) height maximums for the Rainier Corridor of 40 feet. The 65 feet allowable heights are generally out of



scale with existing and planned uses along the Rainier corridor. The potential for very dense, large scale development would detract from the vision of a low to medium scale commercial and residential area which makes immediate and sensitive transitions to adjacent single-family neighborhoods. A “small town” scale is desired, rather than a dense, urban, “downtown” feel. Exceptions:

- Retain the 65 foot height limit on the west side of 38th Avenue adjacent to Alaska Street, which lies at a lower elevation and immediately across from an existing ±60 foot high multi family residential building (rezone from NC3-65 to NC/R-2-65).
- Retain the existing 30 foot height limit on the property bounded by S. Dakota Street, 36th Avenue S., S. Adams Street, and 37th Avenue S.
- Retain existing zoning within the P-2 overlay zones in Hillman City (NC2-40) and Columbia City (NC3-40).
- Retain existing zoning (NC3-40) on properties bounded by Edmunds, Ferdinand, 37th, and the Columbia City P-2 overlay zone boundary.
- Retain existing zoning (NC3-40) on the first parcel immediately east of the P-2 overlay zone boundary, on the north side of Ferdinand.
- Retain the NC designation on parcels fronting Rainier Avenue (rezone from NC3-65 to NC2-40) on the east side of the street between Alaska and Angeline streets.
- Reconsider the zoning on the NC1 zoned property adjacent to the S Alaska Street/Martin Luther King Jr. Way S. intersection during the station area planning process should a LRT station be selected to be built within the immediate area on MLK.

NOTE: Proposed NC/R zone changes outside of the designated Urban Village boundary shall be recommendations only. These zone changes include proposed NC/R areas north of S. Lilac Street and south of S. Lucile Street. Currently, properties lying outside of designated urban village boundaries are ineligible for the NC/R zoning. The plan, therefore, recommends either a future amendment to the Columbia City/Hillman City/Genesee Urban Village Boundary to match the designated Planning Area boundary referenced in the plan

or a policy change by the City to allow for the NC/R designation within non urban village areas or neighborhood planning area boundaries.

C2-g Rezone the Commercial-2 (C-2) zoned area south of Columbia City to Neighborhood Commercial 2 (NC-2/40) (west of 39th Avenue S) and Neighborhood Commercial/Residential 2 (NCR-2/40) (east of 39th Avenue S). Allow single purpose residential uses by right on the those portions of the proposed NC2-40 zoned property that front on S Dawson Street, S. Hudson Street, and 37th Avenue S. This selects commercial zoning classifications for this planning area which prohibit auto oriented uses. The effects of this action are to: (1) discourage large-scale auto-oriented commercial uses at the south end of the historic district, (2) to increase the potential for single purpose residential development (except on the portion of the property that fronts on Rainier Avenue west of 39th Avenue, where nonresidential uses are required unless through a conditional use permit), and (3) to continue to encourage a broad range of commercial uses compatible with neighborhood commercial districts. Reduce the maximum allowed height to 40 feet from 65 feet. The 65 feet allowable heights are out of scale with existing and planned uses along the Rainier corridor. The potential for very dense, large scale development would detract from the vision of a low to medium scale commercial and residential area which makes immediate and sensitive transitions to adjacent single-family neighborhoods. A “small town” scale is desired, rather than a dense, urban, “downtown” feel.

C2-h Rezone currently Lowrise-3 (L-3) zoned areas on south and west of Zion Prep to Lowrise Duplex/Triplex (LDT). These areas are mostly in single-family use, with some duplex/triplex structures and one apartment building. Preservation of the single family residential character is highly desirable and the existing high intensity multifamily zoning causes disinvestment and pressure for redevelopment. Changing the zoning to Lowrise Duplex/Triplex reflects the existing use and better encourages reinvestment in single-family houses, (especially, in concert with other planned single-family efforts in the neighborhood). Should a transit station be built on Martin Luther King Jr. Way S. on land between S. Alaska Street and S Edmunds Street, the zoning for this



property should be reconsidered during the station area planning process.

- C2-i Rezone the area east of Martin Luther King Jr. Way starting one lot deep from Hudson Street southward to Dawson Street to Lowrise 4 – Residential/Commercial (L-4 RC) from Commercial (C1-40).** This area is currently in multifamily residential use. This zoning change would preserve existing residential and encourage new residential. Single purpose apartment buildings would be allowed. A limited number of commercial uses, which are compatible with residential uses, would be allowed outright or in mixed use buildings including: personal and household retail, medical services, restaurants without cocktail lounges, offices, food processing and craft work. This idea should be considered going southward on MLK outside of the Columbia City planning area for the same reasons.
- C2-j Rezone currently Lowrise 2 and Lowrise 3-Residential/Commercial zoned areas along Letitia Avenue S. between S. Lilac Street and S. Genesee Street to Lowrise Duplex/Triplex (LDT).** This area contains limited existing infrastructure, lies on relatively steep slopes, and contains mostly single family residential uses. Surrounding zoning is SF-5000 on nearly all sides. Consider zone change during the station area planning process regardless of selected LRT route and station.
- C2-k Create specific multi-family residential and commercial development guidelines.** Use the design review process to assure that neighborhood goals for compatible design and attractive buildings are achieved for both residential and commercial projects, including rehabilitation of existing structures.

C3 -Programs

- C3-a Develop a land banking and market rate and mixed income housing development program.** Private developers are not purchasing land along Martin Luther King Jr. Way and Rainier Avenue for mixed use or single purpose housing because current zoning makes housing development difficult and because the market for new multifamily rental housing in these corridors is unproven. When sites are purchased and developed, the use is usually a single purpose commercial development dependent upon automobile traffic. SEED or other community development organizations should be

capitalized to purchase key land parcels with housing development potential on MLK Jr. Way and Rainier Avenue. These parcels could then be readied for housing development (rezones, and other regulatory issues resolved) and then re-marketed to housing developers or mixed use developers who are willing to develop market rate housing which meets community objectives for scale, design, amenities, and economic development.

C3-b Establish a neighborhood revitalization area which allows flexible use of federal funds for specific and achievable community revitalization objectives. Activities would include infrastructure, economic development, housing development and rehabilitation (*this has been adopted*).

The City's Office of Economic Development is in the process of identifying and planning neighborhood revitalization areas. This program will result in regulatory flexibility, and could result in access to new funds for neighborhood based efforts which meet neighborhood plan objectives

C3-c Support the activities of the Home Ownership Zone proposed by HomeSight and established by City Resolution.

HomeSight is a non-profit Community Development Corporation (CDC) with a mission to revitalize neighborhoods through affordable home ownership. HomeSight plans to construct up to 100 new homes, provide 40 down payment assistance loans, provide home buyer education, advise owners about rehabilitation resources, and coordinate home ownership activities with capital improvements. City funds should be invested to support home ownership zone activities

Q - d Make planning area (including the homeownership zone) eligible for the City's Multifamily Tax Abatement Program (*this has been adopted*).

State law, RCW 84.14, allows Seattle to offer a property tax exemption as an incentive for the development of new multi-family housing, both ownership and rental. The neighborhood places a high value on use of the program for condominium projects.

C3-e Target the City REACH program for repairs to single-family houses to the area.

The City's 1989 Housing Condition Survey shows Southeast Seattle to be among those neighborhoods with a high proportion of "Deteriorated" and "Dilapidated" housing. The City offers a low interest rate program for home repairs to low and moderate income households to enable them to make home repairs they



normally could not afford. The City should market this program to all single-family homes within the planning area boundaries through concerted, house to house marketing activities including workshops, mailing, signage, publicity, etc.

- C3-f Use light rail station(s) as an opportunity to encourage new housing development.** Station(s) should be located to support neighborhood community development objectives including the development of housing in the immediate vicinity of the stops. While encouraging the development of new housing, protection of existing housing from the impacts of transit stations should also be a high priority. Residents whom are displaced because of transit related condemnation of their homes should receive the most generous relocation benefits possible, including “last resort” housing which is housing financed by transit funds to provide replacement housing which fully meets the financial and physical needs of the families displaced.
- C3-g Create a program for owners of existing buildings with affordable rents to obtain assistance with building improvements.** This planning area has hundreds of rental units built in the 50’s and 60’s which are in poor repair and unsafe condition. This “blight” affects the personal safety of the residents and negatively affects the community’s interest in new housing. Property owners will not reinvest in properties with depressed rents. In the recent past, the City had housing programs which provided funding for private owners of rental housing to obtain low-interest financing to make property repairs, particularly code repairs. A new below-market loan assistance program should be made available to Rainier and MLK corridor rental property owners.
- C3-h Create a mixed income housing financing program to assist community based housing developers to build or buy and rehabilitate existing housing in the Rainier and MLK corridors.** The Rainier Valley has a high percentage of units for very low-income families, estimated to be 5 1% of all rental units, (Southeast Seattle Impact Area). While public investment in housing development and rehabilitation is necessary for the revitalization of the area, the community feels the funds must be invested to further community revitalization and neighborhood plan goals. Within these parameters, additional funding must be made available to this community for housing development and rehabilitation.

C4 – Special Opportunities

C4-a Support the Noji Gardens Home Ownership Project.

The first project proposed in the home ownership zone by HomeSight is Noji Gardens, which is located along South Juneau Street. Up to 100 new construction home ownership units are projected. This plan is supportive of the project and encourages provision of the necessary funding to assure the project is successful.

C4-b Support the Rainier Valley Square II development.

At the north end of the Columbia City planning area, SEED proposes to develop a mixed-use commercial and residential project. The project would reinforce the existing successful Rainier Valley Square commercial center, would develop new housing, and would provide retail services in the Rainier corridor to Southeast Seattle residents.

C4-c Develop market rate multifamily housing projects through a nonprofit/for profit partnerships. The

community is lacking in successful, attractive, multifamily housing in the Rainier and Martin Luther King Jr. Way corridors. Using the land banking mechanism (see *Activity C3-b*), or other resources available to nonprofit agencies, such as City of Seattle Block Grant Float 'Loan, or foundation funds, a nonprofit/ for profit developer partnership could jointly purchase and develop a market rate multifamily property. The development should complement existing commercial centers, utilize good design principles, and strengthen pedestrian and transit links. Demonstration of successful new rental or ownership housing on Rainier and MLK, within the planning area, is important. At least three development projects should be built, one on Martin Luther King Way Jr. Way, one in or near Columbia City and one in Hillman City. This activity would enliven and revitalize these areas and demonstrate the look and marketability of new housing.

C4-d Support efforts at Rainier Vista to provide employment access to residents, and to plan for community improvements. The

496 unit Rainier Vista garden community is on the northwest end of the planning area on Martin Luther King Jr. Way. Rainier Vista has been designated one of six public housing developments in the country as a "Jobs Plus" site. SHA has established a target of tripling the number of residents who are employed. The remainder of



the community and the City should support this effort to improve the lives and resources of the residents.

C4-e Support the redevelopment of the Rainier Vista public housing garden community. The Rainier Vista public housing community was built in the 1940's to house World War II factory workers. Although some physical improvements have been made to Rainier Vista buildings and infrastructure, extensive improvements will be required within the next ten years. Preliminary planning to address existing or imminent problems with the housing units, the site and the supportive facilities at Rainier Vista has begun. The availability of resources to address these problems will heavily influence the type of improvements made. SHA should be encouraged to continue to master plan Rainier Vista and to actively pursue resources to implement the master plan once finalized.

C4-f Support the creation of home ownership opportunities for working households with incomes at or below 50% of the area's median income. A large number of Rainier Vista public housing residents are actively pursuing economic self-sufficiency actions which will lead them to permanent employment. Existing down payment assistance programs assist households with incomes above 50% of median income, incomes which are still above the levels of most Rainier Vista working households. SHA is providing incentives to working residents to save for down payments. This plan encourages the creation of a special program for Rainier Vista residents with good credit and other qualifications for home ownership which working residents could afford.

D. Integrated Transportation System

D1 – Criteria for LRT Route/Station Selection.

D1-a Coordinate with Sound Transit to have them utilize the following criteria created by the Columbia City Planning Committee for their route/station selection:

- Choose the LRT station/route that has the best opportunity for positive community development effects.
- The light rail station should be centrally located in order to serve the most people. It should be within

easy walking distance of Columbia City's Business District.

- The LRT station should have the ability to draw people into the Columbia City Business District.
- The light rail station should be supported by strong local transit connections (both east-west and north-south).
- Construction impacts should be minimized and mitigated.
- Parking impacts to surrounding neighborhoods should be minimized.
- Traffic impacts such as congestion, safety hazards, and the creation of neighborhood barriers should be minimized.
- Pedestrians and bicyclist should have safe, inviting, and convenient access to the LRT station and along the LRT route.
- Development should be concentrated near the station.
- Rainier Vista residents should be provided with strong links to the new light rail stations.
- The station itself should be developed on sites which are blighted or deteriorating, rather than on sites with viable commercial or residential uses.
- Impacts to viable single family housing in the neighborhood should be minimized.
- Opportunities for green space in connection with the station and route should be considered.
- The Columbia City Branch Library expansion should be coordinated with the LRT station planning and development.
- The station should be designed to ensure public safety.
- The station should include public art.
- The LRT station/route should have minimal noise impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods.



D2 – Community LRT Route/Station Recommendations.

D2-a The Columbia City/Genesee/Hillman City Planning Committee and community participants at the July 30, 1998, Light Rail Forum recommend the 37th Avenue S. tunnel alignment with the Columbia City station.

Preference is due to greater transit-oriented development potential, the centralized location, and lesser potential negative traffic and noise impacts. Additional reasons include:

- Ability to draw people into the Columbia City Business District.
- Fewer potential traffic impacts such as congestion, safety hazards, and the creation of neighborhood barriers.
- Better pedestrian and bicycle access.
- Concentrated development near the station.
- This station is more likely to stimulate new housing.
- Station location presents an opportunity to redevelop existing intrusive development.
- Best opportunity to enhance existing parks.
- Best access to the Columbia City Branch Library.
- Station will not be located in the middle of a busy arterial.
- Best opportunity to incorporate public art.
- Least potential noise impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Station is close to a variety of public services and amenities.

D2-b The option for the Martin Luther King Jr. Way S. at-grade alignment is undesirable while the aerial alignment is unacceptable. The community has identified the following reasons the MLK alternatives not be chosen:

- The station will not be centrally located.
- The LRT station will not have the ability to draw people into the Columbia City Business District.
- Unacceptable possible traffic impacts such as congestion and safety hazards (at-grade alignment)

only).

- Unacceptable neighborhood barriers created (severely restricted street crossings).
- Pedestrians and bicyclist access is poor.
- Development is not concentrated near the station.
- The station location in the middle of MLK presents a safety concern and will detract usage.
- Greater noise impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods than the 37th Avenue tunnel.
- Unacceptable view blockage (aerial alignment).

D2-c The option for the “S” curve alignment (Rainier Avenue S. and Martin Luther King Jr. Way S. at-grade) is unacceptable.

Possible station locations associated with this station are at MLW S. Edmunds Street or Rainier Avenue S. /Genesee Street S. The community has given the following reasons the “S” curve alignment not be chosen.

- The route does not involve the station location within Columbia City.
- The LRT station will not have the ability to draw people into the Columbia City Business District.
- Unacceptable possible traffic impacts such as congestion and safety hazards.
- Unacceptable creation of neighborhood barriers.
- The most significant potential noise impacts.

D3 – Transportation Strategies (regardless of selected LRT route/station).

Note: Refer to Figure 42, page 44, for a map of transportation strategies.

D3-a Coordinate with Sound Transit to provide bicycle facilities on, or adjacent to Martin Luther King Jr. Way S. or Rainier Avenue S. Bicycling on either road is currently extremely dangerous. Non-existent shoulders and heavy traffic discourage bicycle use, not to mention pedestrian use. Since almost no reasonable alternatives exist for north-south bicycle access due to topography and the area’s street pattern, measures to accommodate bicycle access along the light rail corridor are essential.



- D3-b Develop a bus loop system connecting area neighborhoods to the LRT station.** This will be essential to effectively, serve the residential areas that lie beyond 1/4 mile from the station (Seward Park, Beacon Hill, etc.).
- D3-c Conduct a detailed transportation analysis of all major north-south transportation corridors within the influence area in conjunction with the Sound Transit light rail line.** This includes Rainier Avenue S., Martin Luther King Jr. Way S., Lake Washington Boulevard, and the Wilson/50th/Seward Park corridor. Analyze potential options for the improvement of MLK/Rainier and the corresponding potential impacts on traffic flow, chatmelization, signalization, bicycle and pedestrian access, and adjacent uses, in addition to potential impacts to other important transportation corridors. The overall intent is to ensure that if traffic revisions are made to one of the corridors, it doesn't come at the expense/degradation of the other corridors.
- D3-d Minimize construction impacts of LRT system to surrounding residents, businesses and traffic flow.** Take precautions to reduce negative impacts to businesses, adjacent residences, and traffic.
- D3-e Maintain current standards of mobility along Martin Luther King Junior Way S.**
- D3-f Develop principles for station area planning.** Develop principles that will preserve and enhance the neighborhood character, reduce and mitigate impacts of transit-oriented development, and incorporate public amenities in station area developments.
- D3-g Provide Rainier Vista residents with strong links to the new light rail station.** Since car ownership is relatively low at Rainier Vista, residents need effective public transportation links to job opportunities. Therefore, the establishment of strong and convenient links, to the new light rail transit stations for Rainier Vista residents, is important.
- D3-h Create residential parking zones (RPZ) in adjacent residential neighborhoods adjacent to the selected transit stations to discourage commuter parking in such neighborhoods.** Since the proposed station areas have a very limited capacity for parking facilities that may be associated with the transit station, the creation of an RPZ in adjacent residential areas is critical.

- D3-i Improve east-west transit service.** Particularly important is the access to Lake Washington and West Seattle. At a minimum, improve the transfer between Route #39 and West Seattle routes.
- D3-j Improve bus stops, particularly those that function as transfer stations.** Provide necessary benches, shelters, lighting, and transit information. Incorporate public art around stops.
- D3-k Improve bicycle access on S. Alaska Street/ S. Columbian Way, west of Rainier Avenue S.** Although the steep hill east of MLK discourages most cyclists, this is one of the only through east-west roads in the immediate area and thus is important, particularly for those who commute to work or school by bike. Improvements could include adding a bicycle lane or providing shoulder improvements (west of MLK).

D4 – Strategies for Individual Station-Area Alternatives

- D4-a Columbia City Station.** As a top priority, develop the underground Columbia City Station at 37th Street S. and S. Edmunds (*see Figure 44, page 47 for schematic plan*). Consider:
- a Integrating the primary station entry into the redevelopment of the Columbia Plaza site.
 - a Create station entries at 37th Avenue S./ S. Edmunds Street and off of Rainier Avenue S.
 - a Preserve historic streetfront buildings in Columbia City.
 - a Special consideration should be given towards private property loss compensation and relocation assistance.
 - a Develop car/bus drop off sites on Rainier south of Edmunds.
 - a Provide streetscape improvements on 37th including street trees, curbs, gutters, new sidewalks, street furniture, signage, etc.
 - Improve pedestrian access from Rainier Vista to station via Alaska and Edmunds.
 - ⊗ Strengthen Columbia Park.
 - ⊗ Expand the Columbia City Branch Library consistent



with architectural integrity.

- Provide streetscape improvements on 35th Avenue S. between Edmunds and Alaska (curbs, gutters, sidewalks, and street trees).

D4-b Genesee Station. If the station and subsequent alignment is chosen despite community recommendations, provide substantially more extensive traffic, aesthetic, and environmental improvements, as well as redevelopment projects along the MLK corridor, and substantially more extensive public investment must be made in the Columbia City core than if the underground station is proposed (see *Figure 43, page 46 for schematic plan*). Consider the following:

- Special consideration should be given towards private property loss compensation and relocation assistance.
- Develop a linear park with separated pathways along Rainier Avenue S. north of Alaska.
- Develop car/bus drop off sites on Rainier near station.
- Incorporate the redevelopment of the Columbia Plaza site into the station area plans.
- In conjunction with proposed linear park and pathway, provide for redevelopment opportunities between the LRT rail and Rainier. Provide streetscape improvements on 37th and 38th avenues including street trees, curbs, gutters, new sidewalks, street furniture, **signage**, etc.
- Provide streetscape and pedestrian improvements on Alaska and MLK to mitigate for rail alignment and crossings.

D4-c MLK/Alaska Station. If the station and subsequent alignment is chosen despite community recommendations, provide substantially more extensive traffic, aesthetic, and environmental improvements, as well as redevelopment projects along the MLK corridor, and substantially more extensive public investment must be made in the Columbia City core than if the underground station is proposed (see *Figures 45 and 46, pages 48 and 49 for schematic plans*). Consider the following:

- Coordinate the development of the station and alignment with the redevelopment of the Rainier Vista public housing garden community. Although some physical improvements have been made since

Rainier Vista was built in the 1940's, extensive improvements will be required within the next ten years. Preliminary planning to address existing or imminent problems with the housing units, the site, and supportive facilities has begun. A MLK/Alaska station will nevertheless have a major impact on the master plan for Rainier Vista. Working with the neighborhood, the Seattle Housing Authority should be encouraged to coordinate the master planning of Rainier Vista with Sound Transit on new transportation improvements.

- Provide for streetscape and pedestrian improvements such as widened sidewalks, landscaping, street trees, and improved sidewalks on MLK to mitigate for rail alignment and limited street crossings.
- Provide for effective signalization and traffic control at the MLK/Alaska intersection to enhance pedestrian safety while maintaining good mobility standards.
- Explore the option of closing off 31st Avenue S between Alaska and MLK to increase redevelopment and open space opportunities.
- Focus on mixed use redevelopment opportunities at or near the intersection of MLK and Alaska, while focusing on multi family residential redevelopment opportunities on vacant or underutilized property in other areas within close proximity to the station.
- Improve pedestrian access from Columbia City's business district to station. This includes streetscape improvements such as landscaping, street trees, sidewalk improvements, **signage**, and lighting for Alaska and Edmunds streets between MLK and Rainier Avenue S.
- Incorporate the redevelopment of the Columbia Plaza site into the station area plans.
- Provide car/bus drop off points near Alaska and MLK.
- Explore the option of realigning 30th Avenue S. and S. Angeline Street from Alaska to MLK to increase redevelopment opportunities.
- Retain the existing ballfield at Rainier Vista.
- Develop a pedestrian pathway from **Renton Ave S.**, southwesterly around the **ballfield** to near the



MLK/Alaska intersection to improve access to the station. Develop a **stairclimb/pedestrian** access from Angeline southwesterly to Mountainview Drive S./30th Avenue S.

- Develop a **stairclimb/pedestrian** access from 30th Avenue westward to 29th Avenue S.

D4-d MLK/Edmonds Station. If the station and subsequent alignment is chosen despite community recommendations, provide substantially more extensive traffic, aesthetic, and environmental improvements, as well as redevelopment projects along the MLK corridor, and substantially more extensive public investment must be made in the Columbia City core than if the underground station is proposed (see *Figures 47, page 50 for schematic plan*). Consider the following:

- Give special consideration towards private property loss compensation and relocation assistance.
- Provide substantial streetscape and pedestrian improvements such as widened sidewalks, landscaping, street trees, lighting, and **signage** on MLK Jr. Way S., 32nd Avenue S., and S. Alaska Street (*with “S” curve route*) to mitigate for the effects of the rail line and rail street crossings.
- Develop a linear park with separated pathways west of Rainier Avenue (between the rail line and the street) north of Alaska Street (*with “S” curve route*).
- Provide streetscape improvements on Edmonds, Ferdinand, and Hudson streets, such as improved sidewalks, landscaping, street trees, lighting, and **signage**, to improve access between the LRT station and Columbia City.
- Explore the option of closing off 31st Avenue S between Alaska and MLK to increase safety and improve redevelopment and open space opportunities.
- Incorporate the redevelopment of the Columbia Plaza site into the station area plans.
- Retain and strengthen single family residential areas between station and historic district.
- Provide for effective signalization and traffic control at the **MLK/Alaska** intersection to enhance pedestrian safety while maintaining good mobility standards.

- Focus on mixed use redevelopment opportunities at the MLK/Hudson and MLK/Alaska intersections, while focusing on residential redevelopment opportunities on vacant or underutilized property in other areas within close proximity to the station.
- Provide car/bus drop off points on MLK near the station.
- Develop a stairclimb/pedestrian access from Angeline southwesterly to Mountainview/30th Ave.

E. Martin Luther King Junior Corridor

EI – Capital Infrastructure

Note: Refer to Figure 50, page 53, for a map of recommended improvements.

- EI-a Install pedestrian activated signals along Martin Luther King Jr. Way S. at Edmunds (or Ferdinand) and Dawson streets, and at Rainier Vista, north of Columbian Way.** Include pedestrian islands to enhance safety.
- EI-b Enhance the Martin Luther King Jr. Way Streetscape.** Develop a unified streetscape design that creates a continuous, safe, attractive pedestrian route. Include widened sidewalks, street trees, marked crosswalks, pedestrian lights, vegetated boulevards and other landscaping.
- EI-c Provide decorative gateway features along MLK to direct travelers to Columbia City's historic business district.** Without such an informative feature, motorists and other travelers may be unaware that the unique business district exists. For northbound traffic, install feature just south of S. Hudson Street. For southbound traffic, install feature just prior to S. Alaska Street.
- EI-d Reconfigure intersections with wider than normal approaches along Martin Luther King Jr. Way to shorten pedestrian walking distance.** This includes intersections at obtuse angles and/or more than one cross-street that increase the amount of street that pedestrians must cross.
- EI-e Close direct access from MLK to 31st Ave S.** Make 31st Avenue a one way street (northbound only) and provide



curb bulbs to slow down traffic. This eliminates dangerous short cuts from Alaska to MLK.

- E1-f Improve pedestrian access from Beacon Hill to the MLK area/Columbia City.** This can be accomplished by developing a stairclimb from 30th Avenue S./S. Mountainview Drive to S. Angeline Street. Provide landscaping at the stairway entryways. Complimentary to the development of the stairclimb, preserve and enhance the greenbelt area.

E2 – Regulatory Measures

Note: Refer to the activities under C2, Residential Neighborhoods and Housing for zone change recommendations. Refer to Figure 49, page 52, for a map of the recommended zoning changes.

E4 – Special Opportunities

- E4-a Support the redevelopment of the Rainier Vista public housing garden community.** (See Activity C4-e for more details.)

F. Public Safety and Community Livability

F1 – Capitol Infrastructure

- F1-a Improve security lighting around schools, parks, public facilities, parking lots, and alleys.**
- F1-b Identify and develop sites for new P-patches, particularly in areas with predominately multifamily residential uses.**
- F1-c Work with the Rainier Community Center to develop a new “Toddler” gym.** While the planning area has a much higher concentration of children under the age of 5 than the city as a whole, there are no applicable community facilities for them.

F2 – Regulatory Measures

- F2-a Aggressively enforce property maintenance and nuisance codes.** Pay special attention to the condition of storefronts, abandoned vehicles, and graffiti.
- F2-b South Precinct funding should keep pace with population growth and changes in crime statistics.**
- F2-c Develop measures to control the siting of new social services in the planning area.** The large number of human service agencies operating within the area have led to community concerns that the continued concentration of these facilities will undermine redevelopment and stabilization efforts. Concern has been expressed over the proximity of some facilities to local schools and business districts, such as Hillman City, which are struggling to redevelop.

F3 -Programs

- F3-a Establish and maintain a visible police presence via foot patrol and bicycle patrol within the planning area's commercial centers.**
- F3-b Restore and expand community-based policing.** Foster a more cooperative relationship between residents, businesses, and public safety officials.
- F3-c Increase SeaTran's budget for Southeast Seattle to improve all services, including street sweeping, litter and garbage service, landscaping maintenance, etc.**
- F3-d Support the continued activities of the Rainier Main Street Program.** Administered by Southeast Effective Development (SEED), the Main Street Program is a business retention, promotion, and attraction program that works with small businesses located in the community, or potential businesses and investors interested in the community. As an image related measure, continue to explore alternative security measures to the security bars on business windows.
- F3-e Secure the ongoing funding for the Good Neighbor Fund (GNF) which includes a facade improvement program and consulting assistance for businesses.** This program is part of the Rainier Main Street Program that provides matching grants for exterior improvements. Beyond funding, additional needs and priorities for the



GNF involve more promotion of the program and technical assistance with facade design.

F3-f Support the continued efforts of the Southeast Seattle Arts Council (SESAC) in adding murals, sculptures, and other visual art to the community. Specifically:

- Support efforts of community cultural groups with facilities in which to work, perform, exhibit, and teach.
- Integrate cultural development with other community development efforts.
- Expand municipal funding for cultural programs, services and development efforts.
- Develop cultural programs, instruction, classes and residencies for children and special needs populations.

F3-g Support the continue activities of the Rainier Chamber of Commerce. Assist in Chamber's biannual neighborhood cleanups. Support the Chamber's anti-graffiti efforts and the Rainier Valley Rose Project, which aims to deter vandalism while beautifying the area.

F3-h Develop and distribute informational brochures/flyers on graffiti, litter, and weed removal tactics. Such a brochure or flyer could include contact numbers (Department of Construction and Land Use and the Rainier Chamber of Commerce), applicable City codes, and graffiti removal tips. Post brochure/flyers at neighborhood bulletin boards, kiosks, public facilities, and local businesses, with permission.

F3-i Incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) techniques. This involves the siting of buildings to allow for security and surveillance.

F3-j Develop a design assistance program for new and existing community business through pro-bono work by local architects and artists. This could involve assistance in the design of new signage, building facade improvement, or interior design elements.